2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
SM3 Caingang SM3
Aweikoma

586 been saying that I have not been taking care of that woman, but I have!" Tendó had not married again and the community refused to admit that Chukembégn's obligations to her were ended.

Indeed I have no way of telling what would happen if a woman in such a position remarried, for Kaingáng society has no other such case to offer in more than a hundred and fifty years of its history.[6] Unless a woman is separated from her husband under the conditions of vendetta, a couple with several children stays together till death. Although the case of Chukembégn and Tendó is isolated it emphasizes the Kaingáng attitude toward marriages of long standing that have produced several children. The breaking up of Tendó's household left the society confused as to just how it should treat Chukembégn for there were no parallel instances. So they simply continued to insist that he owed some kind of support to Tendó, even though he planted his field with Chantágn, seldom went to visit Tendó, and that only when absolutely necessary, and maintained the most tenuous relations with her family.

581 But separations before many children are born are legion. Young people frequently pass through one or two marriages before they finally settle down. The relationship between the sexes is informal, and there is no marriage ceremony. In its early stages the only thing that distinguishes a marriage from a protracted affair is the announcement by the principals that they are married. There is no term for marriage. The Kaingáng use the term *né*, to sit, to express the husband-wife relationship. "He sat with her" means "he married her." Sometimes people do not know whether a couple who have separated have ever been "married." Even before marriage a man and woman may go hunting together, and unless her family takes it upon itself to "send her to him" or the man and woman themselves decide to set up a household, the relationship between the two remains unchanged. The man may even hunt with his sweetheart's relatives and contribute to the household's food supply without yet having the status of a husband. When one of the woman's brothers or sisters or parents see that she is pregnant they may "send her to" her most constant lover, but no stigma attaches to an extramarital birth. Mothers are just as passionately attached to their illegitimate[7] children as they are to their legitimate and all the children have equal chances in life. Illegitimacy, so often the pivotal point of some of the most dramatic episodes in our own and in primitive societies, is completely lacking in drama among the Kaingáng.

[848]

Though the Kaingáng know that unfaithfulness and brittleness are inevitable conditions of marriage among them, its implied permanence and

[6] My genealogies go back about two hundred years and include five hundred individuals of all ages. The fact that a woman has one or two children is no obstacle to her remarriage.

[7] I use this term simply to indicate children born out of wedlock.